

NEWS RELEASE

September 14, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Business Plans and COVID-19 Case Update for September 14th

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) has had 10 new cases of COVID-19 reported since September 8th. SWNPHD has also received confirmation of one additional death due to COVID-19 in the health district. This brings the totals for the health district to 174 cases with 151 cases recovered.

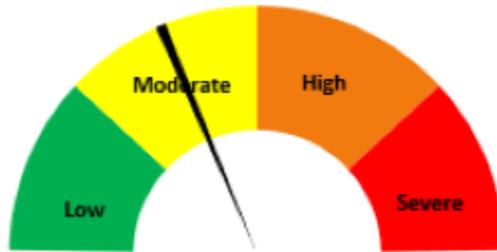
SWNPHD encourages all businesses to have a plan in place for if an employee tests positive for COVID-19 or is exposed to a positive case. Plans should include how to identify close contacts within the business, how to continue operations if several employees are isolated or quarantined, extra sanitation measures, and policies for when to allow return to work. Each business should have their own policies in place now that Nebraska has moved to Phase 4 of the reopening statewide. This continues the transition away from government mandates and return of control to local employers and individuals, to make decisions with information now widely available and to be responsible for protecting the safety of their communities.

This transition to individual responsibility is also the reason SWNPHD is moving away from reporting individual case data towards following the risk dial guidelines for the week. At this point in time, the preventive actions to reduce the spread to ourselves and those around us should be a part of everyday life. This includes the three W's: *wear a mask, watch your distance, wash your hands*. These three actions will help everyone to be safe at home and at work.

The COVID-19 Community Risk Dial for the week of September 14th is yellow, meaning residents of southwest Nebraska have a moderate risk of contracting COVID-19. Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or who would like to be tested can call their medical provider or sign up for a free TestNebraska event. Locations are listed after completing the health assessment online at testnebraska.com.

COVID-19 information is available at CDC.gov and swhealth.ne.gov. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook.

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COVID Yellow: Moderate Risk of COVID-19 Spread

General Public	Outside the Home – Work, Social, In Public	At Home
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider staying at home most of the time, with caution for non-essential travel and work Distance at least 6 feet from anyone outside the home Work from home if possible Individual outdoor activities such as walking, biking, etc. are acceptable Cautious expansion of interactions with others, outdoor activities preferred Gatherings only with modifications for COVID-19 Events only as guided by SWNPHD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No distancing for people without symptoms, unless they are under quarantine as a result of being exposed to someone who is infected Self-isolation of symptomatic persons Outdoor activities with distancing are acceptable.
Face Covering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face coverings suggested when unable to distance Face coverings for symptomatic people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No face coverings for people without symptoms, unless they are under quarantine as a result of being exposed to someone who is infected Face coverings for symptomatic people
Hand Washing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching high contact surfaces, sneezing/coughing/touching face, or before eating Use hand sanitizer when handwashing is inaccessible or infeasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching high contact surfaces, sneezing/coughing/touching face, or before eating
Illness Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If ill with Flu-like or COVID-like symptoms, Stay at Home Minimize contact with symptomatic people Daily temperature checks at work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for COVID-like symptoms
Disinfecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid bare hand contact with any high touch surface Use barrier such as paper towel or clothing when bare hand contact is unavoidable Wash hands or apply sanitizer after touching high contact surfaces Enhanced disinfection, especially for high contact surfaces (door/other handles, light switches, bathroom fixtures) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced disinfection, especially for high contact surfaces (door/other handles, light switches, bathroom fixtures)
At-Risk or Vulnerable Population	<p>For adults over age 65, anyone with underlying health conditions, and other populations at heightened risk from COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home as much as possible Rely on help for needs outside the home (groceries, medications, etc.) Distance from those working outside of the home 	